

**Opening Statement of the Honorable Greg Walden**  
**Subcommittee on Communications and Technology**  
**Hearing on “FCC Reauthorization: Improving Commission Transparency – Part II”**  
**May 15, 2015**

*(As Prepared for Delivery)*

Good morning. Thank you for joining us here today to discuss a topic that I have long championed – FCC Process Reform. I'm pleased to announce that Ranking Member Eshoo and I will re-introduce the FCC Process Reform Act. This is a bill that passed the House in the 112th Congress and that the 113th Congress passed unanimously. We are dedicated to improving the way the government does its business and we are introducing this bill again with the hope and expectation that the third time is the charm.

We all agree that things could be better at the FCC. The Commission regulates an incredibly dynamic and innovative sector in the American economy. It ought to serve the public in a transparent and predictable manner. This is the best way to protect consumers and to provide stability for industry and investors. Our bill would set procedural guardrails to protect against the potential for lapses in process.

Specifically, our legislation would set goals for Commission process and would allow the FCC to determine for itself the best way to meet those goals. The objective is to permit the FCC significant latitude in setting its own deadlines and developing performance measures for program activities. The public will be able to measure the Commission's progress by means of annual reports detailing its performance in meeting the deadlines. And, provided that the Commission completes the required rulemaking and inquiry process, the bill will also provide for non-public, collaborative discussions among the Commissioners, which currently are prohibited by the Sunshine in Government Act.

I am also pleased to bring several bills offered by my colleagues across the aisle before the subcommittee for discussion; I applaud their willingness to work with the majority on improving FCC process and I believe there is significant merit to the draft bills offered. We are looking forward to working together on these bills.

Representatives Clarke's draft bill requires the FCC to publish a quarterly dashboard marking progress on petitions and complaints at the FCC, allowing the public to determine for themselves how efficiently the FCC is operating. Representative Loeb's bill would require the Chairman to publish the internal procedures at the FCC, which would, for the first time, allow the public to understand how decisions are made when the Commission goes behind closed doors to amend proposed rules. And, Representative Matsui's bill would encourage the FCC to improve access to government for small businesses. These are all fine ideas that can gain bipartisan support and improve the state of the FCC significantly.

Together, with the draft bills we discussed at our last legislative hearing, and the consolidated reporting bill that was passed unanimously by the House in February, these are real steps toward a higher standard for transparency of decision-making at the FCC. It is high time. The industry deserves an efficient and effective regulator we can truly call “expert,” just as the public deserves a transparent and accountable federal government.

I'd like to thank our guests for being with us today. Mr. May and Prof. Benjamin are both recognized experts in administrative law, and former Commissioner McDowell has the invaluable experience of having been a part of the Commission. Your combined experience and expertise with the FCC make you invaluable advisors on how our proposals may impact the agency and the industries governed by the FCC. We thank you in advance for your insights and look forward to what you have to say.

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